# Appendix D

# Marine Corps Planning Process Tools

The commander and his staff use Marine Corps Planning Process tools to record, track, and analyze critical planning information relative to the battlespace, the enemy, and friendly actions. These tools, when used properly, assist the commander and the staff in building situational awareness, assist in the preparation of plans and orders, facilitate the commander's decisionmaking process, and increase tempo. Marine Corps Planning Process tools must serve the needs of the commander and the requirements of the situation. Use of Marine Corps Planning Process tools consists of IPB products and planning support tools.

Table D-1 identifies commonly used templates, worksheets, and matrices and how each tool supports the Marine Corps Planning Process. The examples in this appendix are at the MEF level, but these tools may be employed at any level of command. The formats and uses of these tools may be modified as required.

**Table D-1. Marine Corps Planning Process Tools.**

| OVERLAYS, TEMPLATES, MATRICES, WORKSHEETS, AND GRAPHICS AND NARRATIVES | MISSION ANALY-SIS | COA DEVEL-OPMENT | COA WAR GAME | COMPARI-SON AND DECISION | ORDERS DEVELOP-MENT | TRANSI-TION |
|---|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| Modified Combined Obstacle Overlay (see fig. D-1, page D-4) | X | X | X | | | |
| Doctrinal Template (see fig. D-2, page D-5) | X | X | X | | | |
| Situation Template (see fig. D-3, page D-6) | X | X | X | | | |
| Event Template (see fig. D-4, page D-7) | X | X | X | | | |
| Event Matrix (see table D-3, page D-8) | X | X | X | | | |
| Decision Support Template (see fig. D-5, page D-9) | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Decision Support Matrix (see table D-4, page D-10) | | X | X | X | X | X |

**Table D-1. Marine Corps Planning Process Tools—Continued.**

| OVERLAYS, TEMPLATES, MATRICES, WORKSHEETS, AND GRAPHICS AND NARRATIVES | MISSION ANALY-SIS | COA DEVEL-OPMENT | COA WAR GAME | COMPARI-SON AND DECISION | ORDERS DEVELOP-MENT | TRANSI-TION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Course of Action Graphic and Narrative (see fig. D-6, page D-11) | | X | X | X | X | |
| Synchronization Matrix (see table D-5, page D-12) | | X | X | X | X | X |
| COA War Game Worksheet (see table D-6, page D-14) | | | X | X | X | |
| Comparison and Decision Matrix with Comments (see table D-7, page D-15) | | | | X | | |
| Comparison and Decision Matrix with Sample Ranking (see table D-8, page D-15) | | | | X | | |

# 1.  IPB Products

Intelligence preparation of the battlespace is a systematic, continuous process of analyzing the threat and the environment in a specific geographic area. The IPB process helps the commander selectively apply and maximize his combat power at critical points in time and space. It determines the threat's likely COA, and it describes the environment in which the command is operating and the effects of the environment on the command's operations. Battlespace and weather evaluations assist in identifying obstacles, mobility corridors, and avenues of approach; predicting weather effects for numerous mobility options; and estimating sea conditions. Intelligence preparation of the battlespace includes templating with a threat doctrinal assessment to show potential threat objectives and activities. This templating continues from planning to execution, both to assess current operations and to support planning for future operations.

Intelligence preparation of the battlespace products graphically record and display the results of the IPB process. Table D-2 identifies the major IPB products and shows where they are integrated into the planning process. Note that both the G-2/S-2 and the G-3/S-3 are responsible for specific products. While IPB starts as an intelligence effort, it expands to an operational process and has logistic and communications applications that are not shown in the table. The following subparagraphs provide a short description of each product.

**Table D-2. IPB Integration Throughout the Marine Corps Planning Process.**

| | MISSION ANALYSIS | COA DEVELOPMENT | COA WAR GAME | COA COMPARISON/ DECISION | ORDERS DEVELOPMENT | TRANSITION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Modified Combined Obstacle Overlay | **G-2/S-2** → | | | | | |
| Doctrinal Template | **G-2/S-2** → | | | | | Continuous[1] |
| Situation Template | **G-2/S-2** → | | | | | Continuous[1] |
| Pertinent Threat COAs | **G-2/S-2** → | | | | | Continuous[1] |
| Refined and Prioritized Threat COAs and Event Templates and Matrices | **G-2/S-2** → | | | | | Continuous[1] |
| Initial Decision Support Template | | **G-3/S-3/OPT** → | | | | Continuous[1] |
| Decision Support Template Matrix | | | **G-3/S-3/OPT** → | | | Continuous[1] |
| [1]Templates are updated throughout the operation. | | | | | | |

**Table D-3. Event Matrix.**

| NAMED AREA OF INTEREST | NO EARLIER THAN | NO LATER THAN | EVENT/INDICATOR |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | H + 6 | H + 12 | Brigade-sized forces moving north. |
| 2 | H + 6 | H + 12 | Brigade-sized forces moving north. |
| 3 | H + 12 | H + 24 | Orangeland forces enter Blueland. Northern Operational Group driving on Jesara oilfields. |
| 4 | H + 14 | H + 24 | Orangeland forces seize junction of Highways 7 and 8. Northern Operational Group turns northwest toward Jesara. |
| 5 | H + 18 | H + 24 | Orangeland forces enter Tealton. Northern Operational Group driving on Jesara. |

## e. Decision Support Template and Matrix

The decision support template is normally developed during COA wargaming. It is derived from doctrinal, situational, and event templates. The decision support template depicts decision points, time phase lines associated with movement of threat and friendly forces, the flow of the operation, and other information required to execute a specific friendly COA. The decision support template is a key planning tool for use during transition and execution. The decision support matrix provides a recap of expected events, decision points, and planned friendly actions in a narrative form. It shows where and when a decision must be taken if a specific action is to take place. It ties decision points to named areas of interest, targeted areas of interest, CCIRs, collection assets, and potential friendly response options. The decision support template and matrix may be refined as planning progresses after the war game. See figure D-5 and table D-4.
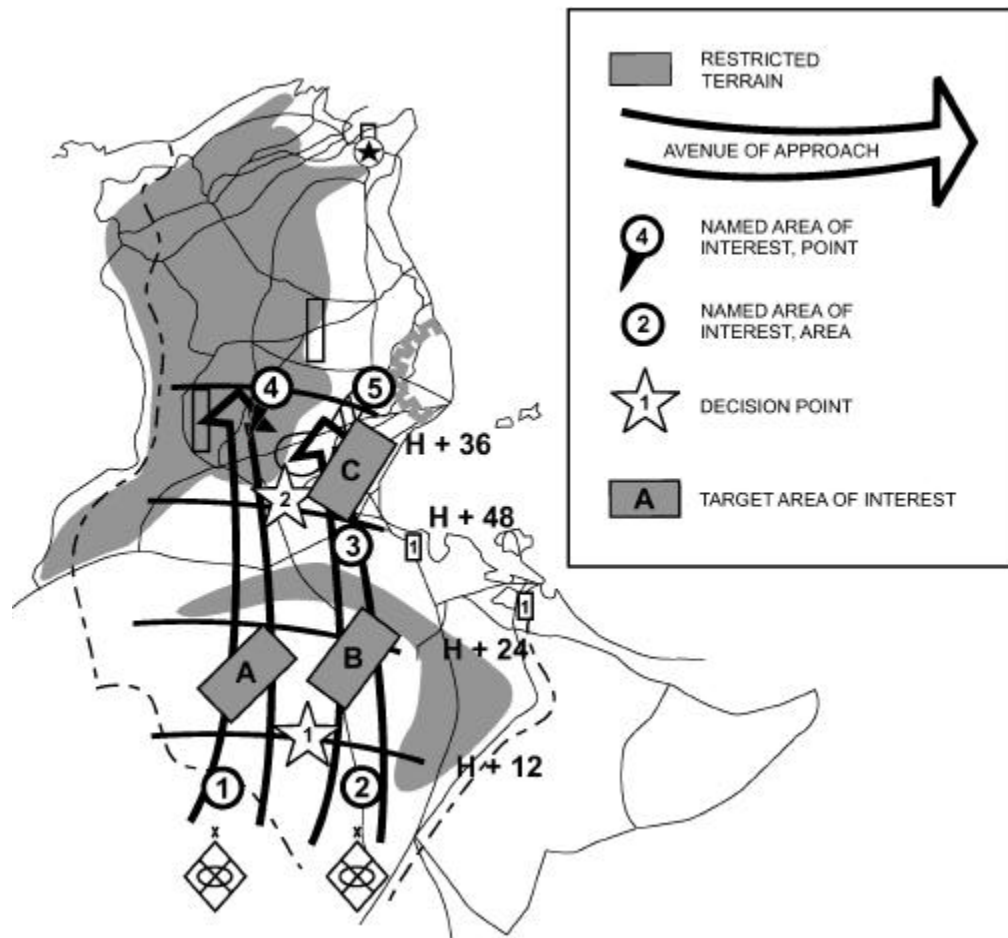
**Figure D-5. Decision Support Template.**